

# Application Report



**Applicant Organization:** Wayfinder Family Services  
**Project Name:** Early Intervention Family Navigator  
**Application ID:** App-22-657  
**Funding Announcement:** FY 22-23 Service Access and Equity Grant  
**Awarded Amount:** \$550,000

**Project Summary:** This Community Connector project will serve families of babies born premature and/or born with additional medical complications through a team of three (3) full-time community-based Early Intervention NICU Navigators. The Navigators will conduct in-person outreach to families and hospital personnel at an estimated twenty-five (25) NICU departments located throughout Los Angeles and Ventura Counties. This project will facilitate warm connections, enrollments, and follow-ups with social support programs throughout Los Angeles and Ventura counties including referrals to Regional Center services, mental health programs, early intervention services, and community based organizations in each family's local area. A trauma-informed approach will be used to serve these families who have experienced a traumatic-birth circumstance, with particular focus on engaging mental health and peer-support resources for caregivers while navigating families into all eligible programs and services.

**Authorized Certifying Official:** Allison Burdett    aburdett@wayfinderfamily.org    -  
**Project Director/Manager:** Allison Burdett    aburdett@wayfinderfamily.org    -  
**Project Manager/Coordinator:** Faith Cardenas    fcardenas@wayfinderfamily.org    323-295-4555  
**Compliance/Fiscal Officer:** Noemi Vasquez    nvasquez@wayfinderfamily.org    323-295-4555

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**Section Name:** Applicant Eligibility

**Sub Section Name:** Applicant Information

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**1. Applicant Question:** Project Title

What is the Project Title?

**Applicant Response:**

Early Intervention NICU Family Navigator

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**2. Applicant Question:** Awarded Amount

What is the total amount awarded for the project?

**Applicant Response:**

\$550,000

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**3. Applicant Question:** Organization Type

Choose the response that best describes your organization.

**Applicant Response:**

Community Based Organization (CBO), 501(c)(3)

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**4. Applicant Question:** Description of Organization/Group

Provide a brief description of the organization or group. Explain what experience your organization has managing a project similar to the proposal and state the outcomes of that project. You may upload your brochure or add a website link.

**Applicant Response:**

Wayfinder Family Services provides expert, individualized support and person-centered services to children, youth and adults who have vision loss, developmental disabilities and/or multiple disabilities. Wayfinder also provides services to foster youth with serious medical conditions or trauma, and their families. We offer the largest infant development program of its kind in California which began in 1983 and serves more than 13 regional centers statewide. 40% of the children we serve have existing involvement with DCFS and 85% are from low-income households. We have extensive experience managing public funds including regional center vendorization to provide code 805 services, operation of 5 CCL licensed group homes. We hold contracts with the Los Angeles County DCFS to provide community-based behavioral health services, operate a birth-18 shelter, provide Medi-Cal Administrative Activities, and also provide fee for service programs for the Department of Vocational Rehabilitation.

**Attachment:**

[Wayfinder-Annual-Report-2020-21-ip.pdf](#) - PDF FILE

[Strategic-Plan-Wayfinder-2.23.22.pdf](#) - PDF FILE

[Wayfinder-Fact-Sheet-2021-22.pdf](#) - PDF FILE

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**5. Applicant Question:** Applicant in Good Standing

Is the applicant in good standing with the California Secretary of State, California Franchise Tax Board, and California Department of Tax and Fee Administration? Please upload confirmation letter(s) or proof of good standing.

**Applicant Response:**

Yes

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**6. Applicant Question:** Subcontractors in Good Standing

Are the applicant's subcontractors in good standing with the California Secretary of State, California Franchise Tax Board, and California Department of Tax and Fee Administration?

**Applicant Response:**

Yes

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**Section Name:** Grant Reapplication Information

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**Sub Section Name:** Grant Reapplications Only

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**1. Applicant Question:** Previous Award(s)

Did your organization receive DDS grant funding in fiscal year 2020-21 or 2021-22? If yes, go to question 2 to complete each column. If no, skip this category and go to category 3.

**Applicant Response:**

No

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**2. Applicant Question:** Previous Grant Award(s)

Since fiscal year 2020, complete a row for each DDS Service Access and Equity grant your organization was awarded funding.

**Applicant Response:**

Year Awarded	Project Title	Grant Number	Award Amount
N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

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**3. Applicant Question:** Previous Grant Outcomes

Provide a brief grant summary of your project outcomes for fiscal year 2020-21 and/or 2021-22.

**Applicant Response:**

Not Applicable

**Applicant Comment:**

Not Applicable

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**4. Applicant Question:** Project Transition

If awarded, how will your current project(s) transition into the 2022-23 proposed project? Does your proposed project expand or continue your current project, if so how? What activities, measures, or target groups are being added? Provide a summary of the differences and reasons why you are proposing the change.

**Applicant Response:**

Not Applicable

**Applicant Comment:**

Not Applicable

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**Section Name:** General Application

**Sub Section Name:** Proposal Summary

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**1. Applicant Question:** Project Type

Choose the project type that best describes your activities from the list below:

**Applicant Response:**

Community Connector

**Applicant Comment:**

This Community Connector project will serve families of babies born premature and/or born with additional medical complications through a team of three (3) full-time community-based Early Intervention NICU Navigators. The Navigators will receive thorough training in Wayfinder best practices for trauma-informed care and Collaborative Problem Solving, and will conduct in-person outreach to families and hospital personnel at an estimated twenty-five (25) NICU departments located throughout Los Angeles and Ventura Counties. This project will facilitate warm connections, enrollments, and follow-ups with social support programs throughout Los Angeles and Ventura counties including referrals to Regional Center services, mental health programs, early intervention services, and community based organizations in each family's local area. A trauma-informed approach will be used to serve these families who have experienced a traumatic-birth circumstance, with particular focus on engaging mental health and peer-support resources for caregivers while navigating families into all eligible programs and services. The project does not aim to duplicate efforts of existing navigator programs, but will work to significantly increase the number of families connecting to regional center services, social support programs, and other generic services by identifying families across dozens of medical settings county-wide.

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**2. Applicant Question:** Duration of project

Choose the duration of your project.

**Applicant Response:**

24 months

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**3. Applicant Question:** Regional Centers

Choose the Regional Center(s) that your project will serve. Check all that apply. If you are proposing a statewide project, select the All Regional Centers/Statewide option.

**Applicant Response:**

- South Central Los Angeles Regional Center
- Tri Counties Regional Center
- Westside Regional Center
- San Gabriel/Pomona Regional Center
- North Los Angeles County Regional Center
- Harbor Regional Center
- Frank D. Lanterman Regional Center
- Eastern Los Angeles Regional Center

#### 4. Applicant Question: Counties Served

List the county or counties your project proposes to serve. Check all that apply. If you are proposing a statewide project, the select All Counties / Statewide option.

##### Applicant Response:

- Los Angeles County
  - Ventura County
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#### 5. Applicant Question: Community Based Organizations

Will you be working with one or more Community Based Organizations? If so, provide the name of the organization and how you will be working together.

##### Applicant Response:

We will utilize and expand on Wayfinder's existing relationships with resources serving 0-5 children with special needs. Wayfinder partners with Baby2Baby and Daymaker to receive essential program supplies for NICU babies and families with in-kind items including diapers, wipes and formula. Other partners include Children's Bureau Prevention & Aftercare Collaborative, Infant Development Association, Partners for Children South L.A, Los Angeles Regional Food Bank, and Ronald McDonald House.

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#### 6. Applicant Question: Multiple Organizations

Does your project include partnership with one or more organizations either as a co-applicant or subcontractor? If "yes", please upload a letter of support from each organization, that includes an explanation of their role in the partnership.

##### Applicant Response:

No

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#### 7. Applicant Question: Strategies and Sustainability

How will your project continue its work after the grant funding has concluded?

##### Applicant Response:

Wayfinder is vendored to provide Code 805 infant development services, and therefore has an existing program structure with which to support this Navigator program beyond the term of the grant. If sufficient referrals from the regional centers are produced to Wayfinder's 805 service code program, then the additional volume of service is expected to support the Navigator activities on an on-going basis.

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#### Sub Section Name: Target Population

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#### 1. Applicant Question: Ethnicity Groups Served

Select the ethnicity group(s) the project will serve. For "Indian", "Pacific Islander", "Slavic" or "Other" use comment section to list specific groups.

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**Applicant Response:**

- African American
- Hispanic
- Chinese
- Pacific Islander (list)
- Native American
- Filipino

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**2. Applicant Question:** Ethnicity Group(s), Language(s) and Number of Individuals Served

For each ethnicity group, provide the number of individuals your project intends to serve and the related language(s).

**Applicant Response:**

Ethnicity Group(s)	Individuals Served	Language(s)
Hispanic	500	English, Spanish
African American	500	English

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**3. Applicant Question:** Age Group(s) Served

Select all Age Groups the project will serve.

**Applicant Response:**

- Birth up to Three (Early Start)
- Three to Five

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**Section Name:** Project Application

**Sub Section Name:** Project Application

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**1. Applicant Question:** Project Summary and Organizational Experience

Provide a clear and concise project summary that includes a defined target population, catchment area, and project design. Specifically describe what your project will accomplish and how it will benefit the community served. In your answer, include what experience your organization has working with the target population and how your organization will work with the local RC(s).

### **Applicant Response:**

This project is designed to serve children birth to 5 years old. The target population includes families who have children admitted to a Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU) or have recently been discharged (to a lower level of care or) to their home from one of the many NICU departments throughout Los Angeles and Ventura County. The project does not intend to duplicate the efforts of other navigator projects in the catchment area, and instead will provide families with the benefit of trauma-informed, in-person outreach and follow-up visits focused on families of babies 0-5 with special care needs. 3 full-time Navigators will provide in-person outreach and follow up with families. The project is 24 months in length to maximize the effectiveness of providing longitudinal support to families with complex needs. Application and assessment processes for some social support programs can take several months to complete, therefore a 24 month project term will facilitate increased follow-through for families. The project designates two Navigators serving Los Angeles County (including travel to Lancaster and Palmdale) and one Navigator covering Ventura County. Navigators will hand-hold families through the complexity of managing the application process with all resources they need. The Navigators will engage with families, social work teams, transition planning teams, and medical staff at each hospital to identify babies and caregivers in need of Navigator support and provide information sessions about the program. Each Navigator will build relationships with approximately 6-8 NICU departments and visit each one 2-3 times per month. The in-person, hands-on methodology of the project will help to alleviate some of the demand on hospital transition planning teams so that families of NICU-admitted babies receive maximum support to follow-through with engaging their support network of resources. The project will also work to address disparities in health access equity for undocumented and/or non-English speaking families who will benefit from 1:1 follow-up in their preferred language. The project aims to reach a minimum of 100 families per month, totaling 1,200 per year. Navigators will support families through the regional center application process and enrolling with any other social support program they need. Navigators will work with local community based organizations to ensure each family's needs are met. Wayfinder has over 40+ years of experience in providing 0-5 services to more than ten regional centers (vended to provide service code 805) and school districts in the Southern California region, with experience and connections we will leverage to ensure families receive effective navigation into the services and supports they need. Wayfinder will continue to attend VAC meetings and connect with the Community Services unit of each regional center to maximize the enrollments and local connections made for their consumers and families.

### **Attachment:**

[Regional Center Code 805 Infant Dev Service.pdf](#) - PDF FILE

[Wayfinder-Fact-Sheet-2021-22.pdf](#) - PDF FILE

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## **2. Applicant Question:** Data and Community Input

Explain why you have selected your priority population(s) using RC POS data and other data as supporting evidence of the disparity or inequity. Include how your organization used input from the community, target population, and RC to design the proposal.

**Applicant Response:**

This project was designed to support families of babies with extensive support needs as a result of our ongoing conversations with regional center Community Services Directors, Service Coordinators, members of pediatric prevention & aftercare collaboratives, and members of the pediatric ophthalmology and surgical fields. Per LACDPH data, families who face barriers to accessing prenatal care and education, are non-English speaking, and/or are undocumented are more likely to experience a pre-term birth, therefore this project aims to address disparities in access to services. At the 6/3/21 POS Data Townhall meeting, SCLARC identified reasons contributing to the non-utilization of services including families relocating without notifying the regional center and miscommunication between family and vendors. This project would work to address these barriers through the unique advantage of offering in-person visits, maintaining contact with families and increasing regional center referrals.

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**3. Applicant Question:** Uniqueness

How is the proposed project unique from a currently funded grant (e.g., strategies, activities, and goals) in the proposed RC catchment area? If the project is similar to a currently funded grant listed on the Department's website, how is the proposed project different?

**Applicant Response:**

Trauma-informed care is essential for families having experienced the NICU environment and navigating a medically complex birth. This project is unique by providing in-person visits at dozens of hospital sites, which will facilitate a stronger connection between the family and Navigator, and helps to establish trust especially with families who might be undocumented, non-english speaking and/or be living with poverty. Additionally, this project will help address the goal of preventing child abuse and neglect with the benefit of being able to view the home environment and observe whether the family has adequate resources and caregivers can express confidential concerns in-person.

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**4. Applicant Question:** Improve Equity and Service Access

How will your project measurably improve equity, access, and reduce barriers to services for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities and their families?

**Applicant Response:**

Navigators are community based and will be traveling throughout the most rural and underserved parts of the county, including the Santa Clarita and high desert regions. Families are often overwhelmed at the hospital site and will benefit from in-person follow-up services provided in their home setting and individualized for them to enroll with their local support agencies. The program will be able to better track families who move and relocate due to the follow-up design and provision of peer support groups and playdates for parents. Language barriers will be addressed by holding events in multiple languages and families will not have to arrange transportation since Navigators will be traveling to them.

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**5. Applicant Question:** Support of RC Plan

Does the project support the RC plan to promote equity and reduce disparities in their catchment? If you are a RC, how does this project support your recommendations and plan to promote equity and reduce your identified disparities? How will your project collaborate with other organizations to promote community inclusion?

**Applicant Response:**

Families who learn about Self-Determination and Person-Centered Planning as part of early intervention will be better prepared to make decisions and support their child. During the June 3rd, 2021 POS Data Townhall meeting, SCLARC identified reasons contributing to the non-utilization of services including families relocating without notifying the regional center and miscommunication between family and vendors delaying services. The proposed Navigator project would work to address these barriers through the unique advantage of offering in-home follow-up visits, maintaining contact with families and increasing service coordination. According to the “Los Angeles County Infant Mortality, Preterm Births, and Birth Weight Factsheet”, when comparing the four major races/ethnicities, African American babies have the highest rate of low birth weight births at 12.1% compared to 6.5% of Hispanic and White babies. Service Planning Areas 2, 1, and 6 in Los Angeles County have the highest rate of preterm births both at 11.0% compared to 9.1% of countywide. According to March of Dimes. In 2020, the rate of preterm birth in California is highest for black infants (12.3%), followed by American Indian/Alaska Natives (11.7%), Hispanics (9.1%), Asian/Pacific Islanders (8.3%). WFS has 40 years of experience in serving the unique underserved needs of families experiencing traumatic/medically complex births.

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**6. Applicant Question:** Project Activities and Measures

**Note: Before answering this question, applicants must complete the Activities Template located in the middle tab directly above.**

The schedule of activities clearly and specifically demonstrates the steps that the project will take to achieve its stated objective and measures. Do the proposed measures appropriately track the project objective and activities, provide insight into the effectiveness of project, and demonstrate impact on the target population?

### Applicant Response:

The proposed measures appropriately track the project objective and activities, as Navigators build relationships with the local NICU's, families in the NICU's and Community Based Organizations there will be an increase in referrals completed to meet the identified needs of families. During what can sometimes be a traumatic experience, Navigators will identify the individual needs of each NICU family and provide them with resources and connect them to a local community based organization or social support program based on each need they identify. For example, the Navigator can support the family by referring them to their local Regional Center and providing a warm hand off to the intake coordinator. If a family has a child in the NICU and their home is not nearby, the Navigator can refer the family to the Ronald McDonald House where they can stay and be closer to their baby. Navigators will follow up with each family to ensure their need was met by the resource or referral that was provided, increasing service utilization. Families obtaining the resource, referral or service(s) will reveal the effectiveness of this project through the listed measures including number of families reached, number of referrals made to each resource, pre and post survey results, and POS utilization data per the standardized measures. In addition to the listed measures specific to this project, Wayfinder will implement data collection measures to gather and report out all required metrics as listed for Community Connector projects per Attachment B. The impact this project will have on the target population is that families will be supported during a time they need additional guidance and help, which will facilitate their ability to focus on meeting all of the needs of their child. The project will give NICU families the opportunity to focus on their child's development and needs, so they can thrive. Trauma-informed care is essential for families having experienced the NICU environment and navigating a medically complex birth. In-person visits facilitate a stronger connection between the family and Navigator, helps establish trust especially with families who might be undocumented, non-English speaking and/or may be living with poverty. Having in-person visits also helps prevent child abuse and neglect with the benefit of being able to view the home environment and observe whether the family has adequate resources and caregivers can express confidential concerns in-person.

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### 7. Applicant Question: Budget Template and Narrative

**Note: Before answering this question, applicants must complete the Budget Template located in the tab directly above.**

The project budget is consistent with the stated project objective and activities, and clearly and concisely explains how the proposed expenditures support the overall project design and outcomes. The project budget costs are clearly associated with the activities and does not include non-allowable costs or costs funded by other sources.

- Budget Template example is located at [Attachment C](#).
- Budget Details and Restrictions are available [here](#).

**Applicant Response:**

The project budget is designed to support the objective of increasing connections to regional center services, local early intervention resources, and social services for families of NICU admitted babies throughout Ventura and Los Angeles Counties. The project aims to reduce barriers for families in accessing resources and reducing disparities in the equity of service delivery through the funding of Early Intervention Navigators who travel throughout the county to make in-person connections with families, hospital personnel, and CBOs offering services in the family's home area. The bulk of the project funding consists of the salaries and mileage expenses for three (3) FTE Early Intervention Navigators to travel between the approximately 25 NICU departments throughout Ventura and Los Angeles Counties. The budget reflects expenditures for a 24 month project in order to facilitate maximum follow-up with families post-discharge from the hospital and provide longitudinal support as needed. Supply costs are intended to facilitate the stated program activities and will help to support families by providing them with some basic items necessary for the care of an infant or young child with disabilities. Wayfinder will supply a care package including diapers, wipes, and formula for families with limited financial resources in order to help support their basic needs while undergoing the process of applying for regional center and other resources. The care package will also help to facilitate trust and rapport-building between the Navigator and the family, and will include a comprehensive guide of county-wide family support resources and a self-care/mental health guide for care providers.

Justify the care packages, use the allowable language

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**Section Name:** Proposal Certification

**Sub Section Name:** Certification

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**1. Applicant Question:** Confirm Proposal Discussion with RC(s)

CBOs are required to discuss their proposal with each RC(s) the CBO is intending to serve. If you are a CBO, have you discussed your proposal with each RC you are intending to serve?

**Applicant Response:**

Yes

**Attachment:**

[List of Regional Center proposal notifications.docx](#) - WORD DOCUMENT

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**2. Applicant Question:** RC Contact

CBOs are required to submit their application concurrently to the Department and to each RC(s) catchment the CBO is intending to serve. If you are a CBO, state the name(s) of the contact person(s) at each RC you have emailed your proposal application. The RC contact list is available here at [Attachment F](#).

### **Applicant Response:**

Please see attached file for complete list of regional center staff contacted regarding the proposal application and have received a copy of the 3 required reports via email.

SCLARC:

Dexter Henderson dexterh@sclarc.org

Wendy Castillo wendyc@sclarc.org

Kiara Lopez kiara@sclarc.org

### **Attachment:**

[List of Regional Center proposal notifications.docx](#) - WORD DOCUMENT

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### **3. Applicant Question:** Code of Conduct

#### **Grantee Code of Conduct**

The Department is committed to supporting services and programs with integrity that foster collaboration and professionalism. Grantees are expected to conduct project activities in a professional and respectful manner that include:

- **Valuing Diversity and Inclusion.** Grantees should embrace diversity that includes but is not limited to: ability, race, language, national origin, citizenship, age, gender identity or expression, sexual orientation, and religion.
- **Conducting Activities with Personal and Professional Integrity.** All activities with individuals, families, community organizations, regional centers, and state, local and federal agencies should be conducted with professionalism, dignity, respect, and fairness. Grantees should be open to listening to different points of view and fostering productive communication.
- **Providing a Positive Work Environment:** All projects should foster a positive and respectful work environment with their colleagues and other grantees.

### **Applicant Response:**

- I acknowledge that I have reviewed the Code of Conduct.
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### **4. Applicant Question:** Applicant Certification

By submitting this application, the Applicant is certifying the truth and accuracy of the proposal. The applicant also certifies that if you have subcontracting organizations, each participating organization has reviewed your project and agrees to their assigned activities, measures, and the budget.

### **Applicant Response:**

Yes

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